

## COURAGE OF CONVICTION

(Mr. EDWARDS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, because of the courage of conviction of 53 Texas legislators who broke a Texas House quorum on Monday morning, 20 million Texas citizens will have the right to have their voices heard in shaping the future of their hometown communities, to have their voices heard in our democracy.

I salute these 53 profiles in courage. They have unselfishly stood up for Texas citizens and open government in our State, members like David Farabee, Patrick Rose; from my district in Waco, John Mabry and Jim Dunnam; Joe Pickett and Pete Gallego.

Mr. Speaker, while most Americans were honoring their mothers on Sunday, Mother's Day, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY) and Tom Craddick in Austin were plotting and planning a secret map that would have destroyed, literally devastated, historic communities of interest all across Texas. This slick plan was to pass out of the Texas House at 10 a.m. on Monday morning after Mother's Day.

This Mother's Day massacre plan was only stopped because of the courage of these 53 legislators who said secret government in shaping the future of our State for the next decade was wrong. These Members were right. I salute these soldiers of democracy.

## REMEMBER THE ALAMO

(Ms. DELAURO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DOGGETT).

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding to me.

To those who say that these Texas State representatives essentially "took their marbles and went home," remember that this game was fixed by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY) before these folks ever had a chance to play.

To our colleague who dared mention the heroes of the Alamo, (Mr. JOHNSON of Texas) it takes far more courage to put your political life on the line than to follow like sheep. And how ironic, it was William Barrett Travis who drew that line in the sand at the Alamo, and it is the county named for him that is being sliced and split apart like never before in the history of our great State.

Desertion, yes. The people of Texas were deserted when TOM's buddies refused to have redistricting hearings around the State and listen to the people and when my neighbors in Travis County were locked out of those hearings and then ignored. That is the real desertion that these brave Texans—Dawnna Dukes, Eddie Rodriguez, El-

liott Naishtat, and their colleagues are fighting in Ardmore, Oklahoma, this morning.

## H.R. 919, HOMETOWN HEROES SURVIVORS BENEFITS ACT

(Mr. ETHERIDGE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, as we pause to remember this week our law enforcement officers who have made the ultimate sacrifice, I rise to pay tribute to our Nation's finest. These are our hometown heroes, and all they ask is that we provide them with quality equipment and for someone to care for their families should tragedy strike.

Too often the families of public safety officers killed by heart attacks or strokes while performing their duties are denied the public safety officers benefit that they so richly deserve.

I have introduced, H.R. 919, the Hometown Heroes Survivors Benefits Act, to right this wrong. This bipartisan piece of legislation will provide this benefit to the families of public safety officers who are killed by a heart attack or stroke in the line of duty. H.R. 919 has 163 cosponsors, and it is endorsed by a number of organizations.

Mr. Speaker, as we observe National Law Enforcement Memorial Week, I urge all my colleagues to join me in honoring our law enforcement officers and all of our hometown heroes by supporting H.R. 919.

## UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION BENEFITS

(Mr. DAVIS of Illinois asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, come May 31, unemployment compensation benefits are going to run out or expire for over 1 million workers in America who have lost their jobs. Last week this House passed a whopping tax break for the wealthiest 5 percent in our country, but nothing for the unemployed.

If we really want to stimulate the economy, let us put some money in the pockets of laid-off workers. Let us put some milk in the baby's mouth and some bread on the table. Let us extend benefits for the unemployed.

## CONGRATULATING THE 53 TEXAS STATE LEGISLATORS

(Ms. DEGETTE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. DEGETTE. Mr. Speaker, as a Member of Congress from a State where last week the legislature, controlled by the Republican Party, suspended every rule in the legislature,

suspended the Colorado Constitution and without any public hearing whatsoever completely changed the congressional boundaries in Colorado, I think there are no more courageous people in this country right now than the 53 Texas State legislators who went to Ardmore, Oklahoma, and if there is anybody in this body who thinks that it is a fair process that they are contemplating in Texas, they should just look at what happened in Colorado last year.

After the last census in Colorado, the legislature was unable to come up with congressional lines, so the court drew the lines. The election was held. The election was fair, and there were seven representatives elected in Colorado. Now, with no warning in the last 3 days of the congressional session, the Colorado Legislature completely changed the lines. There were no public hearings. There was an hour of testimony taken. All of the rules were suspended, including the rule in the State senate for recorded votes so people would know how their senators voted.

If anybody thinks the Texas Legislature led by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY) was thinking fairly, they are wrong.

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## TEXAS LEGISLATURE

(Mr. CULBERSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CULBERSON. Mr. Speaker, I had the privilege of serving 14 years in the Texas House; and the Texas prisons were under the control of the Federal courts, the public school system there is under the control of the State courts, the mental health system is under the control of the courts. We have advocated in Texas control over too many functions of government to the courts. As a Member of the legislature, I fought tenaciously to regain control over those institutions.

This redistricting discussion is one that the legislature is constitutionally obligated to do. The legislature has held hearings, as they are supposed to do. Anyone with an idea on how to change boundaries can submit those suggestions to the legislature. For the Texas State legislators to have shut down the entire legislative process really shows utter desperation. Frankly, they have resorted to the political equivalent of suicide bombing and blowing up the entire legislative process rather than debating, as they should, on the floor.

I got out and voted in the 14 years I was there regularly, fighting an income tax the Democrats created. I was beat and defeated on that vote. Republicans were defeated on many, many votes throughout the years. We never walked out. We never left. They have a duty to do their job. They ought to be back in Austin taking care of the people's business.